

Builders Forum

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"Dear Velocity" A Love – Hate Letter

*By Ursula Wiehl,
Hettiswil, Switzerland
(wife of Herb Wiehl)*

Dear Velocity,

Well you became a pretty thing, sort of sexy, as the old lady next door said with a sweet little grin.

You changed during the last five and a half years. Remember how often I called you names like Buzzard and Black Hole for our savings? Well it was not easy for the two of us, although I was not against you at all. I even admired your looks, especially your huge winglets. But – I have to admit – I totally underestimated your influence on our marriage. You showed up, and within a heartbeat I was history. At first I was convinced that my husband Herb's airplane project was far easier to deal with than some young, longlegged mistress. What a fool I was!

You didn't just take my husband – you took his friends in as well. The many sleepless nights, because of me? Not! My hubby's forlorn gaze into space, the blank looks and speechlessness; well, all because of you! You with your constant ridiculous little problems of growing up

In short, you became the focus of my husband's life, and the lives of his friends as well. We, the three wives, were cast off like last year's fashion. Finally we got it: our husbands betrayed us for you, an ugly heap of styrofoam. They groveled at your feet, at hundreds of bolts, at a few barrels of epoxy, at yards of cables



Ursula Wiehl working with epoxy on the Velocity's sump tank

and glassfiber. How often did we trash the overcooked remnants of a nice meal from our cooking pans, lovingly prepared many hours ago? How many lonely nights we waited for our husbands, who – when they finally made it home – dragged themselves up the stairs in a cloud of dust and fell into bed where they quickly lost consciousness. Saturday night fever of the experimental builders. So much for the usual weekend fun.

Fall came and I had to learn how to repair a fence, paint a house and chop wood because my husband was really busy building an airplane. With all I had to go through, I wasn't going to freeze. At that point you and I reached our worst low. Just the thought of you made me sick.

Well, summer came and I made a strange deal that brought us somewhat closer. One day my husband Herb was in desperate need of small hands - to do a tricky job on you. You get it? You sort of needed me. Well, my Mother needed some vacation, preferably in our company, which wasn't exactly the first thing on Herb's mind. I started to deal: One hour of work for Herb in exchange for one day of Mom in the back of our car I grabbed an apron, put on a mask (vintage WW I), and started to cut your glassy skin and fill you up with epoxy. Your wings started to grow, I worked on your intestines, on your sumptank. Your nicely shaped nose? You got it from me! My first nose job. "If you don't like your own nose" said my sympathetic husband one day – "why don't you help Velocity get a



From left to right: Ruedi Marti, Herb Wiehl (AOPA # 00794367-5) and Alfons Hubmann

prettier one?"

Anyway, I started to see you from a different angle. We grew closer and one day you literally became a part of me because my ponytail stuck to the fresh layer of epoxy on your right wing. With a huge and rusty scissor Herb finally separated us, at the expense of much of my hair. A part of me is now locked into you forever. Did you get that?

Spring came again, Summer, Fall and Winter passed by, again and again. I lost count. I came to see you sometimes, and heaved myself into you, but only if no one was around to watch this strange performance. To climb in as one would normally enter an airplane wasn't possible with you. It was a real sports show! First you had to go into a sprint to gain enough speed, then jump onto your polished and slippery wing, turn quickly to a sitting position, pull your legs up, roll backwards and try to fall on to your feet into the cabin. Well. In the meantime YOU did not grow older ... at least looking at the two of us, and YOU did not become clumsier. Herb promised to build a little ladder for me.

With another Spring and Summer, five years had passed. Long ago friends had given up asking about you. Not many people believed in you anymore. But then, you were finally completed, born from the ashes into a beautiful sphynx. Day of first flight had arrived. It was rainy, cold, and real nasty. We huddled in thick jackets, our lunchbag was loaded with pots of hot coffee, tons



Ursula and Herb Wiehl, presenting the finished and polished Velocity during an air-show in Bern, Switzerland



The Velocity 173FG HB-YHV is powered by a Lycoming IO-360 (200 HP) and pushed by a Mühlbauer MT constant speed propeller

of sandwiches and a fine bottle of wine to celebrate your flying. The short sunny spells were just long enough to dry you over and over again. Our testpilot, a former Swiss Airforce pilot, only wanted to fly you dry. Finally the rain stopped and you taxied, accompanied by the whole firefighting brigade of Bern's International Airport, to the run-up position. From all the offices around, people came running and were cheering. The three of us were numb

with excitement. You got takeoff permission and started to gain speed. You got faster and faster and then – all of a sudden - you slowed down. Consternation everywhere. We felt the disappointment like a slap in the face. What happened? Brakes and oil got way too hot. You weren't ready yet, obviously. Well, we did not achieve much but icy feet and an opportunity for the firefighters to exercise. We drank the wine anyway.

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Second trial: This time the sky is smiling, a balmy day. Again our pots are full of coffee. A loaf of bread and a hunk of cheese are waiting in the picnic basket. Our testpilot taxis with you again to the takeoff position but this time in the company of only one small firetruck. Very few people are shyly glancing sidewise out of their office windows. Again you start to gain speed, you get faster and faster and off you go!! Climbing up as if you had never done anything else in your life but fly. We stared at you getting smaller not daring to look at each other. But a certain sniffing and the rustle of Kleenex is not lost in the breeze. You fly!! It is October 4, 1999 at 11:11am local time!

YOU FLY!!! An unforgettable moment, hard to describe. Almost six years of waiting for this day, over six thousand working hours, so much frustration, despair, hope and excitement! We are worn out, but enormously happy, and thankful for all the people that helped you grow up into a magnificent bird.

We grew older with you, Velocity. You taught us a lot – like patience, and the ability to cope with frustration a little better. After all, you became a part of our life. VELOCITY.

*Love, yours forever,
Ursula*

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Ivo Prop Update, New Type “Hi Low” Pressure Switches for RG System, Fuel Venting

*From Rick Lavoie
St. Augustine Florida*

Well, I now have 511 hours on my Hobbs meter and all is well with N570. The Franklin engine and IVO prop are still working just fine together. I recently removed my prop and sent it to Ivo for inspection. Ivo said that he saw no evidence of structural damage and told me to

return the blades to service after about 500 hours of wear and tear! Scott looked the blades over and felt comfortable with them as well. He said they held up remarkably well. As far as the motor (the electric motor that changes the pitch of the blades), it has worked without any trouble since Ivo updated a few parts well over 250 hours ago. So, am I happy with my Ivo / Franklin combo? Yes, I am. Speaking of the Franklin, I just completed my annual and the compression is still right up there. The lowest cylinder shows 78/80. Still running very smooth.

While taxiing, I noticed that my RG pump would kick on every now and then. Knowing that I had struggled with the pressure settings (high should be set at 1050, and the low at 550 psi), Scott suggested that I change to the newer style Hi Low pressure switches. With the old switches, I was unable to set the high and low as per plans, and have the gear work properly. These new switches are factory pre-set, so in theory, there is no need to plumb in a pressure gauge to set the high and low psi (so long as it all works proper). The new style has just one screw for adjusting the pressure (vs. two screws in the old). One caution if you need to change the switches out, the new ones are taller (see photo to right)! This is due to the two extra fittings needed to plumb them into the flared line. Thus caution is required to be certain they do not hit the canard (or forward cover).

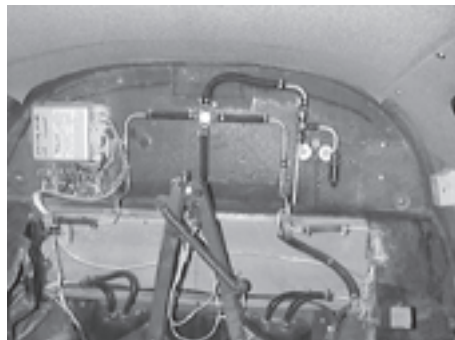


If you have the old style pressure switches, and they work ok, then I would not bother to change them out. The new ones do work great. I did need to shorten the aluminum line to keep a good clearance between the switches and the canard. I shortened the aluminum tube to the shortest possible length. This length was determined by my flare tool. With the fittings in place, it can only be so short!



The photo above shows the tight clearance under the canard forward cover. The left pressure switch (Low) still has the protective rubber boot on. The right switch (High) has the boot slipped off.

What’s all this talk about uneven fuel tank distribution? If there is a problem, I have never seen it in N570. In over 500 hours logged, my fuel always drains even from both tanks. I did follow the standard “Elite” style venting and fuel line installation method, invented by Scott in 1995 during Elite prototype construction. I do inspect my fuel caps and keep them lubed with petroleum jelly on a regular basis.



The above photo shows the fuel venting from all three tanks going to a common manifold for a single venting source. It also shows the alternate venting source through a one way valve. The one way valve is important, as it only lets air in (and nothing out, including fuel). This is a safety, in case your primary vent line gets clogged. Besides the new manuals, past newsletter issues have detailed the “Elite” fuel venting system:

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What's left to do? Main gear doors need to be finalized and finished, minor sanding and finish work. Some manipulation of doors for better fit. Lots of extra though and work on many areas all installed. \$47500.00

Contact Dennis@pc-c.com or call 413 543 2396

Also see:

www.pc-c.com/velocity
more info and pics going up soon.

Sportair Workshops
Velocity
Construction
June 1-3
Griffin, GA



For Sale

1996 Velocity FG, Elite Doors

1996 Velocity fixed gear with elite doors. IFR equipped, can be seen at the factory in Sebastian. \$79,000 talk to Scott or call R. Westwater at 603-880-4137



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Velocity complete top half windows installed, door completed, top cowl still attached & uncut, undamaged, access door completed never installed. Building SUV Call Tom Wright for price Located in Somerset PA Call 814-445-3802

For Sale Velocity Standard FG Kit

Velocity fixed gear std model, all parts glassed, quality work, io-360 lycoming engine zero smoh, several extras

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Please remember that on weekends, and after hours, we do not answer the 561-589-1860 phone number. Our unlisted builders hot line is 561-589-0309 and, if we are here, this is the only number we will answer.

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